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HOUSEKEEPERS' CHAT

Monday, April 24, 1933.

(FOR BROADCAST USE ONLY)

Subject: "More Dishes for Economy Menus." Information from the Bureau of Home Economics, U.S.D.A.

--ooOoo--

Economy Monday is here again, another Monday to discuss low-cost dishes for economy menus. That reminds me of a question which has just come in. Remember the talk we had a few weeks ago about low-cost salads? Well, one listener writes that her favorite low-cost salad is potato salad. And she wants directions for making potato salad that looks tempting and tastes even better than it looks. Potato salad is a favorite with a lot of people. It is popular in winter when salad greens are scarce. It is popular for picnics and community meals because it is easy to make, inexpensive and convenient to carry. It is popular for Sunday night suppers and other informal quick meals. And it is popular for cold meals in warm weather -- in fact, for any meal where a cold, well-seasoned, starchy dish will fit the menu. Yet, the sad fact is that many potato salads are unattractive and tasteless. Some are too mushy, some are too dry, some are so poorly seasoned that they seem to have no flavor at all.

Uncle Ebenezer declares that what this world needs is a Potato Salad Improvement Society to remedy the situation. Members would work to promote proper cooking of the potatoes, and proper seasoning and serving of the salad. Now about the cooking. The aim is to have the potatoes cooked tender but firm, cut in even pieces, and a nice white in color. Don't use dark colored potatoes in salad. And don't use those that are overcooked so they break and become mushy when you add the dressing. Cook the potatoes in their skins in boiling salted water until just tender. Skin them right after cooking. If you let them chill before you cut them up, you'll have less trouble with crumbling and breaking. Of course, you can use left-over boiled or even baked potatoes, but the freshly boiled potatoes probably give the best results.

So much for the cooking. The next problem is seasoning. For dressing, you can take your choice of French or cooked dressing or mayonnaise. Cooked and French dressing are less expensive and probably do the best job of thorough seasoning. That's what potato salad, or any other bland, starchy salad needs -- thorough seasoning. When you make crisp fresh green salad, you don't apply the dressing until the very last minute. Quite the contrary with potato salad. Here you let the dressing stand on the potatoes for a few hours until it penetrates each piece. If you use cooked dressing, you can put it on either hot or cold. And then let the mixture stand in the refrigerator to become well-seasoned and chilled. If you use French dressing put it on cold potatoes and let the salad stand until the potatoes absorb it.

Now about the extras, the ingredients that add to the looks and the taste and texture of potato salad. For color and flavor you can add green pepper, chopped parsley, pimiento, chopped pickles, green beans or peas, or sliced hard-cooked eggs. For extra seasoning, add chopped onion or onion juice, diced celery or celery seed, capers, chives, vinegar seasoned with a little garlic, or chopped wild spring leeks. Arrange the salad carefully on a bed of lettuce, watercress, or curly endive, or garnish it with celery leaves and parsley. A good way to utilize the large leaves from the outside of a head of lettuce is to shred them with scissors and use them for greens in a salad like this.

Our inexpensive dinner menu for today features potato salad. Let's talk over this menu and then I'll give you a good recipe for inexpensive cooked salad dressing.

The menu: Browned bologna sausage; Rye bread; Green beans buttered; Potato and green pepper salad; and for dessert, Berry pie made of canned berries. Once more; Browned bologna sausage; Rye bread; Green beans, buttered; Potato and green pepper salad; and, for dessert, Berry pie made of canned berries.

Now the recipe for an inexpensive cooked dressing for your potato and green pepper salad. Eight ingredients:

2 eggs
1/4 cup of water
1/4 cup of vinegar
2 tablespoons of sugar
1/2 teaspoon of salt
1/4 teaspoon of mustard
1/16 teaspoon of celery seed, and
2 tablespoons of butter or other fat.

Once more. (REPEAT)

Beat the eggs, add all the ingredients except the fat. Cook in a double boiler until thickened. Stir constantly. Just before removing from the fire, add the fat. Pour this over the diced potatoes while hot. Or use it cold. This is the same dressing that you use in cole slaw and in wilting spring greens.

Tomorrow we're going to talk about ways to use raw wool for home-made bedding. Housekeepers on many farms this year have a supply of raw wool which they can't sell at a profit. They have been writing to know how to use it at home.